



Origins

THE FIRST-YEAR PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

Instructor Spotlight:
Stephanie Howell

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*"today, like yesterday,
spoken word is giving
a voice to the voiceless"*

-Danny Simmons

Spoken Word in Chicago, my Explore Chicago class, is a performance based class that gives students the opportunity to experience spoken word performance(s) throughout the city and within our classroom. Students are exposed to a plethora of different spoken word styles: Slam Poetry Autobiographical, Monologue, Auto-ethnographical, Prose, and Personal Narrative. Furthermore, students have the opportunity to meet and experience the performances of international, national, and local spoken word artist.

Spoken Word in Chicago also encourages students to begin to think critically (and from the heart, embracing the notion of vulnerability and empathy) in regards to the ideology of Social Justice and Equality.



Through various readings, performance texts, and utilizing the city of Chicago as one of our classrooms, students are encouraged to place themselves in the (metaphorical) shoes of another and begin to embody "spoken word is giving voice to the voiceless".

As an educator and performer, I recognize the importance of finding one's agency, not only within academia, and not only within a creative artistic aesthetic, but also, as a person in the world. In our Spoken Word class, I encourage students to begin to put their voice out into the world. So very often, I have encountered the ways in which our (new) students are apprehensive to embrace their own thoughts and understandings, along with, their creativity in the classroom. By building a safe and respectful classroom culture, students learn that their own voice is worthy and valuable; this understanding stays with them—not only at their tenure at DePaul University but into their everyday lived experience in the world.

Stephanie Howell
Adjunct Professor
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From the Director

This is the 20th year of Chicago Quarter and to celebrate that accomplishment, we had a party at the DePaul Art Museum on Sept. 19. Speakers included four people who deserve much credit for the development of the program: former EVP for Academic Affairs Dick Meister, former LAS Dean Mike Mezey, LAS Dean Chuck Suchar, and AVP of Student Development Peggy Burke. Former FYP Director and current Associate Dean Mark Pohlad concluded the event with a toast to the people who founded Chicago Quarter and those who have kept it going strong all these years. On the second page of today's newsletter, we have a montage of photos from the event taken by Chicago Quarter Committee Chair Adam Steele.

Here is an excerpt from Dean Suchar's speech: "... there's an excitement in first-hand experience, a rush, a joy, an enthusiasm, an emotional side to learning, that you need to experience yourself to really know and understand. In the Discover Chicago course, I believe, the first-hand experience led to students finding out about their own sense of the city, their own sense of interest, their own critical and evaluative voice, their own perspective and 'point of view' – in other words, their own 'Chicago'. It's that very personal identification with learning that had the reciprocal effect of a much more personal connection to the teaching of the course itself and, hence, its popularity among faculty, staff and students alike, and a major reason for its success, I believe."

Along related lines, the Richardson Library currently has a display case dedicated to "Explore and Discover Chicago at the DePaul University Library." It contains books, articles, and photos about the social reforms of Jane Addams and Florence Kelly, the Chicago Plan from Burnham to the present, and the inevitable "Partners in Crime: Gangsters and Politicians," featuring Mayors Dever and (R.J.) Daley, as well as Al Capone. Check it out!

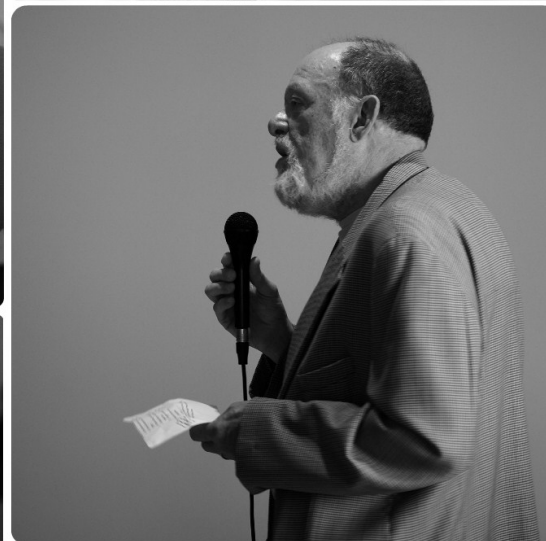
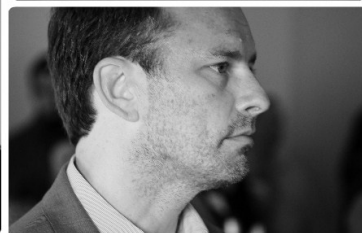
We have a couple important events coming up for both Chicago Quarter and Focal Point Seminar instructors:

- Chicago Quarter Faculty Chat: Several of you have already registered for this annual event, in which we let our hair down and talk informally about the nitty gritty of the classes, sharing stories, solving problems, and drinking coffee (BYO). The focus, as always, is on the student experience during their crucial first quarter at DePaul. This year's chat is on Friday, Oct. 17, details below.
- Focal Point Seminar Best Practices Conference. Once a year, we ask all the Focal Point Seminar instructors to get together for faculty development and lunch. You'll be getting more information on this annual meeting, but in the meantime, please mark it on your calendar: Friday, Nov. 21, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in LPC Student Center 314 A & B.

— Doug Long

Important Dates!

- Friday, Oct. 17, 2-3:30 p.m.: Chicago Quarter Faculty Chat, Rosati Room (300), Richardson Library
- Oct. 18-19: Chicago Architecture Foundation's Open House Chicago, with free access to 150 historic buildings around the city. <http://www.openhousechicago.org/>
- Friday, Nov. 21, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.: Focal Point Seminar Best Practices, LPC Student Center 314AB
- Dec. 15: [Chicago Quarter proposal](#) deadline



At the "20 Years of Chicago Quarter" event, spiraling in from top left: LAS Dean Chuck Suchar; past & present First-Year Program Directors Chuck Suchar, Midge Wilson, Mark Pohlad & Doug Long; Peggy Burke, AVP of Student Development; former LAS Dean Mike Mezey; Prof. Sean Kirkland; Dick Meister, former EVP for Academic Affairs; Bro. Mark Elder; Prof. Jim Montgomery; Associate Dean Warren Schultz. (photos courtesy of Adam Steele)